

No. 2

ADDITIONAL
LETTERS

FROM

Parents
OF FISK STUDENTS

AND FROM

Alumni

Together with
Certain Other Statements

RELATIVE TO THE

Recent Disturbance

AT

Fisk University

February 4, 1925



PARENTS AND ALUMNI

LETTERS FROM COLORED PEOPLE

All letters of commendation from white people have been excluded from this pamphlet, so far as the identity of the writers is known.

[**Erratum**—In the first pamphlet the letter of President A. Eugene Thomson, of Lincoln Ridge Institute, was inadvertently printed. President Thomson is white.]

GENERAL ATTENDANCE

The comparative attendance at Fisk, before and since the disturbance, is indicated by the table below:

	Prior Enrollment	Present Enrollment (March 12)	Per Cent of Prior Enrollment
College	291	164	56
High School	86	59	67
Elementary School	65	65	100
Music only	58	56	97
	509	344	64

The trend back to normal is shown further by the fact that a considerable number of other students are making application to return for the next and succeeding quarters.

2415 Dowling St., Houston, Texas,
February 22, 1925.

Dr. F. A. McKenzie,
President Fisk University,
Nashville, Tenn.

Dear Dr. McKenzie:

Since I have returned home from Fisk I have visited and talked with all of the parents who had children attending the University, and my opinion is that I have made friends of them for the Institution. I have succeeded in having those who are able agree to send their children back to school. The following pupils will be there not later than the beginning of the next quarter: Mr. Wm. Moore, Miss Harrietta Mitchell, Miss Eulalia Edwards and Miss Jennie Hayes.

You may depend on me to speak a good word for you and the school. I want to hope that you will continue to stand by your convictions as regards the management and administration of the affairs of the school. I think the ideals which have made Fisk famous throughout the length and breadth of this country should stand, and should not be changed to satisfy any individual or group of individuals.

I am praying that you will not deviate one iota from the position you have held and are holding. By all means the standard set by Fisk University must not be lowered.

Trusting that you will continue to enjoy the confidence of the best thinking element of my people, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) W. L. D. JOHNSON, SR.,
Father of a student.

Tyler, Texas,
February, 1925.

My dear Dr. McKenzie:

Your statement and Miss Scribner's letter came today. I have been blue since a knowledge of the affair reached me late last week.

Your statement and Miss Scribner's letter state just what I told my wife and children was the status of the case. A lot of young hot-heads urged on by DuBois' agitation lost control of themselves.

Knowing student life as I do, not even my own children can swerve me the one-eighth of an inch in line against authority.

As Alumni of the University you have our heartiest support and deepest sympathy. Stand firm and hold the reins. The storm will blow over.

We are sympathizingly yours,

(Signed) T. J. AUSTIN, '85.
MRS. T. J. AUSTIN, '87.

M. I. College, Holly Springs, Miss.,
February 23, 1925.

President F. A. McKenzie,
Fisk University,
Nashville, Tenn.,

Dear President McKenzie:

It grieved me to hear of the disturbance at
Fisk University.

Allow me to assure you that you have my
sympathy.

I earnestly trust that the situation will
mean a brighter day for Fisk and that success
will continue to crown your noble efforts.

You have my prayers and support for the
things which contribute glory and honor to
Fisk's name.

A loyal alumnus,

(Signed) ETHEL C. RIVERS, '24.

6 Chestnut St., Atlanta, Ga.,
February 22, 1925.

Dr. Fayette McKenzie,
Nashville, Tenn.

Dear Sir:

I have received from your office, very recently, clippings from the local newspapers there telling the incident which occurred there February 4. I also received letters from your office written by various leading officials and from the Vice-Chairman of the Institution.

I feel very sorry that such came about. I am in sympathy with you in such a time as you have had. These unfortunate outbreaks occur in many other places. Although we are all sorry, it may be for the best after all. God suffers his followers to experience such evils, sometimes on account of the guilty one. You have my deepest sympathy and continued prayers.

My child remained. I hope she will always, until she graduates, be under the watch-care of a Christian Institution, Fisk University.

Very respectfully,

(Signed) MARY M. GRIMES,

Teacher in Atlanta Public Schools, and mother
of a student.

Tampa, Florida,
February 21, 1925.

My dear Dr. McKenzie:

Having carefully read the several communications sent me from your office setting forth the high ideals for which Fisk University has always stood and from which I pray God she may never waver, I cannot, for the life of me, see wherein such regulations (than which I can conceive of none more ennobling) could in the remotest manner justify the recent deplorable action taken by some members of the student body—misguided irresponsible youths—who have no conception of the far-reaching and destructive consequences of their acts. I wish to assure you that I am more than ever (if it is possible for me to be so) in absolute accord with the great principles for which Fisk University stands, which principles are solely responsible for her leadership among similar educational institutions throughout this Southland. I am in sympathy and hearty accord with your determination to perpetuate these principles. It was because of the lofty ideals, its thorough training in intellectual and moral excellence, that I selected Fisk University as the place for my daughter's education. I cannot tell you how deeply I regretted her ill-advised departure. Had I one-tenth the information as to the cause of her urgent telegram for transportation home as I have now, she would have remained. I trust, however, that her place at Fisk will be reserved for her in October, 1925, for she shall return. She is completing the term at Daytona Cookman Collegiate Institute, Daytona, Florida. It is my earnest hope that you may not falter or in the least become discouraged in upholding and perpetuating the Fisk standard, in doing which I am sure you shall have the endorsement—the God-speed of all right-thinking patrons and friends of Fisk—the South's premier institution for the higher education of the Negro.

You are fighting for a righteous cause; you are defending the institution against insubordination, student rule, control of dictation, whichever designation seems most applicable but either of which means disaster.

Finally, I would commend for your encouragement at this time a perusal or recollection of Rudyard Kipling's "If."

Yours very truly,

(Signed) J. A. BUTLER.

(J. A. Butler, M.D., office 1404 1-2 Central Ave.; residence 1312 Marion St., Tampa, Florida.)

Father of a student.

709 N. Central Ave., Okmulgee, Okla,
February 21, 1925.

Dr. F. A. McKenzie,
Fisk University,
Nashville, Tenn.,

Dear Dr. McKenzie:

I did not realize just how serious the outbreak among the students was, until I received clippings and letters from Tennessee friends some days ago.

I was terribly upset and very much grieved to think that at this time of all others in the history of the school, a riot should occur. At this time—when a million-dollar endowment had been completed. At this time—when plans for enlarging the plant had been submitted. At this time—when the thing that the founders, faculty and all true-hearted alumni and former students had prayed for had been consummated: viz., recognition as a class "A" college.

I have been hearing from time to time during the last few years that many of the students who were coming did not have the Fisk spirit; that they were restless and did not take kindly to such restraint and discipline as was necessary to develop in them the highest ideals of manhood and womanhood. I had been wondering if they were worthy of the many advantages coming to them; if they would prove in after life a credit to their Alma Mater.

The outbreak of February 4, answers in thundering tones, "No"

I was afraid you might become discouraged or disgusted and resign just at a time when no living man can do for the school what *you* through God's help can do. No living man has the *vision* for this particular school as you have it.

Let me digress here, to say that whatever of good I have been enabled to accomplish in life, whatever principles of noble womanhood have been inculcated in my daughter, Elaine Nixon Busch, have been in a very large measure due to the training and high ideals we received while in Fisk.

Last Sunday morning my pastor in his sermon told the story of Gideon and the reduction of his army in order that he might overcome the Midianites. You know the story. It came to me, Dr. McKenzie, that his message was given to me to give to you. Be strong! Be steadfast! Know that there are still throughout the length and breadth of this country the faithful "three hundred" who are with you and the principles for which you are fighting. The class of students who remained, the class of students who will come will know that law and order, and good conduct will be demanded of them. The parents who send their children will know that the children are getting the kind of training that will make good men and women and law-abiding citizens of them. The agitators and knockers will know that "God is God and right is right, and right the day will win"; and, for a while at least, they will stop trying to misguide the impressionable minds of the youth who come to Fisk. A greater Fisk will rise Phoenix-like from the ashes of this disorder and riot, because only the true and tried will remain; only those desiring good government will be sent, and they, working with you and faculty, will make the school what you would have it be.

I have not said one-tenth of what I'd like to say, but I must stop.

Although this letter is rambling, take it for the meaning in it, which is: that I am with you first, last and always for upholding the *Fisk ideals*.

God bless you.

(Signed) MARIA BENSON NIXON, '88.

W. M. MCGHEE
BRIGADIER GENERAL COMMANDING
Jurisdiction, State of South Carolina
U. R. K. of P. . . .
1107 Fairfield St.

Aiken, S. C.
February 20, 1925.

President F. A. McKenzie,
Fisk University,
Nashville, Tenn.

Dear President McKenzie:

I received the letter and the statement made to you from the different patrons of Fisk University, expressing their views about the trouble that occurred on the Fisk campus, on the 4th inst. I regret very much that such things did happen, and we are very much in sympathy with you in the matter, knowing how hot-headed students will get at times especially when they are being influenced from outside sources. Our attitude in the matter was clearly shown, and demonstrated to this extent, when our daughter Beatrice wrote us about the affair we did not become alarmed at all, but in order for us to get the facts in the case Mrs. McGhee thought it best to go and see for ourselves, and we would know. This she did and to show that we had no intentions of removing our daughter from the school, for that reason my wife made it convenient to see you and get your permission to let our daughter, Beatrice, come home for a few days, as was advised by the doctor, so as to avoid a nervous breakdown, and you willingly gave your consent. She has returned and will be on the campus ready to continue her studies.

We indeed thank you so much for the consideration. We are satisfied that conditions in and around Fisk University will soon work out all right. And for that very high standing that you have placed Fisk University in for the past ten years under your administration, it will be impossible for your good work to be blotted out.

This is shown very clearly in all Fisk students. She cannot fail. While some of your old students may not return this will be to their detriment, and simply shows a severe

case of insubordination on the part of certain students which in the end will prove to be a very great hindrance to the students that rebelled. So we are in deep sympathy with the president in this trouble, and you also have my prayers and hearty co-operation, and let me remind you, sir, of the encouraging words that were spoken to Elijah on one occasion, "Take courage, they that be for you are more than them that be against you," and there are thousands left yet who are clamoring for a higher education such as is being taught at Fisk University, and be ye assured that we as parents are teaching our children to be law-abiding and to always obey the laws of the school.

With best wishes for your success, I am

Very respectfully,

(Signed) W. M. McGHEE.

718 Royal St.,
Baton Rouge, La.
February 22, 1925.

Dr. F. A. McKenzie,

Dear Sir:

After reading the letters which you so kindly sent me, I now realize the situation which existed at Fisk during the time of the students' rebellion.

Will you oblige me by permitting my son to re-enter school next quarter, March 20, 1925?

Sincerely,

(Signed) W. H. PATTERSON.

Father of a student.

RIVERVIEW HIGH SCHOOL
JOHN H. DAVIS, Principal.

R. F. D. No. 1, Box 85,
Sylva, N. C.
Feb. 24, 1925

Dr. F. A. McKenzie,
Fisk University,
Nashville, Tenn.

My dear Sir:

Am quite gratified in reading some duplicate letters of interest in regard to your school.

I am yearning deeply within, with intense interest that co-operation and tranquility may soon exist as in the past and the strides of your great institution of learning may tend onward and upward.

You have my deepest sympathy and co-operation as far as it is within my power to serve as a patron.

My son did not leave your school with the spirit of rebellion, but of fear. He wishes to return. But I cannot send him back until the fall term.

I wish you to consider his application for admission at this time.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) JOHN H. DAVIS.

P. S. My permanent address is now Sylva, N. C. I have charge of the Jackson Co. Colored Consolidated School here.

(Signed) JOHN H. DAVIS.

Father of a student.

507 E. Main St.,
McMinnville, Tenn.
Feb. 22, 1925.

Dr. F. A. McKenzie,
Nashville, Tenn.

Dear Dr. McKenzie:

The trouble at dear old Fisk has shocked our little community to a great extent. We are sorry as a whole. Of course individually it has been grievous to several. It has hurt me to think that there are those who would try to tear down the great work which you have pushed forward with such untiring energy.

Some of the students are being swayed by others instead of following their own minds, but I am glad that our girl, Miss Clara Young, has had the courage to stand out and say the actions of the students are wrong.

Somehow I don't feel that God will suffer Fisk to lose its prestige. The work of the Craveths, White, Spence, Gates, Merrill, Wrights, Morrows, down to the present administration with your co-workers cannot sink below the horizon.

There are many who think you are right. We hope you will not give up the reins at this time.

I hope the situation will clear up favorably and all will yet be well. We have two girls from our school planning to come to Fisk next year. I am sure there are others making plans likewise.

I pray God's guidance and mercy and may all yet be well for the Fisk we love.

Sincerely,

(Signed) BESSIE T. GWYNN, ('11).

Kernes, Texas,
Route 3, Box 62

President McKenzie,

Dear Sir:

This will inform you that after reading your communication of a few days ago, I found out that you were right and I highly commend the stand that you have taken to raise the University to a higher standard.

I am sending my boy back to school to stay and abide by all rules and regulations of the institution. The only reason he gave me: he got scared. I want him to be loyal to the Institution and take no part with rebels or disgruntles.

You may rest assured that you will have my support for the noble stand that you have taken.

Success for your future administration.

Your loyal friend,

(Signed) P. J. WALKER.

410 Brush St.,
Carbondale, Illinois,
Feb. 22, 1925.

Dr. F. A. McKenzie,
Fisk University,
Nashville, Tenn.

Dear Dr. McKenzie:

I have read with much concern of the disturbance at Fisk this school year. Because of my attitude toward the University and your principles which I believe, on the whole, to be adequate and right, I welcomed your letter of recent date.

Certainly I regret the disturbance, but appreciate the fact that out of it shall come the revelation of the finer motives for which you stand.

Count on me, Sir, as a stand-patter for the school.

Yours truly,

(Signed) CHAS. O. ROGERS, '24.

Box 156,
Marshall, Texas,
Feb. 22, 1925.

President F. A. McKenzie,
Fisk University,
Nashville, Tenn.

My dear Sir:

The letter of Miss Dora A. Scribner, to hand, and contents noted. I was out of the city, as I am principal of a school, when the letter came. I have read, and reread, the general statement made by you. I indorse your action in full. As I see it you are to dear old Fisk what President A. Jackson was to South Carolina, when she passed the "Nullification Ordinance." President Jackson told the people that it was his duty to enforce the laws of the Union, and this he intended to do at any cost.

After having received the telephone message from Livingstone Hall, I am proud, sir, your military instinct was roused, and that you said the laws of old Fisk must be obeyed, and that you intended to stop the riot at any cost and did stop it.

Nothing succeeds like success. I am glad to note that the school is getting back to normalcy.

Vive le President McKenzie. Vive la Alma Mater.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) N. T. MITCHELL, '83.

Tillotson College,
Austin, Texas,
February 22, 1925.

Pres. F. A. McKenzie,
Fisk University,
Nashville, Tenn.

Dear Dr. McKenzie:

I wish to thank you for the sympathetic letter and a copy of the chapel talk you sent which with the clippings from the Tennessee paper that my son sent made me understand the situation more clearly.

It is to be regretted that students in a school with such advantages as Fisk would commit such lawless acts.

The rules and regulations of Fisk are entirely satisfactory to me, and those who are not satisfied should go elsewhere. I am glad my son has returned to school and I hope he will always remain loyal.

The Great God has a motive for performing all of his acts. In this instance his motive was to remove all of the undesirable students. I hope to have a daughter under your administration very soon.

With my sympathy, I hope for your success.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) MRS. L. STANLEY.

Office of
MRS. MARY N. JONES,
Grand Worthy Counselor,
Order of Calanthe, Knights of Pythias,
Jurisdiction of Georgia.
1636 Fifteenth Street.

Augusta, Ga.
February 20, 1925.

Pres. F. A. McKenzie,
Fisk University,
Nashville, Tenn.

Dear Sir:

Your statements of the 13th inst. received and read with care. At the end I found no suggestion made for a reply, but I feel that it would be a lack of courtesy, on my part, to remain silent at such a crucial moment. I had read of the catastrophe before; but I had read nothing coming from such a reliable source as this.

I can only say that I am sorry; I am deeply grieved; adequate words are not at my command with which to express the deep feeling that envelops my soul and body; and my head is bowed as with a huge force pressing it down.

I sympathize with you and with all concerned. I believe, with my whole heart, that you did what you thought was best in the crisis. God only knows what is best at all times. I trust God will continue to lead and guide you and that all will be well in the end.

I am as ever yours,

(Signed MARY K. COOK, N. '11.

Salina, Kansas,
February 24, 1925.

Dear Professor:

Yours to hand, contents noted with care.

I regret very much to hear of the situation at the university, the boys had become rebellious, and destroying the property of the school. There was not any other course for you but the one you did take.

I do hope it will be settled without serious damage to the *school*. I endorse your course.

If anyone had used their influence in working the students up to such a spirit and caused them to rebel against the school administration, he or she was absolutely wrong. From a letter I received a few days before I received yours, I think I see who it is that is largely to blame for the trouble.

I would be glad to hear from you *soon* in regard to the situation. You have my sympathy and best wishes.

Yours truly,

(Signed) JAMES DePRIEST, N. '77.

P. S.—It does not matter what their grievance was, they are not justified in destroying the school property.

J. D.

3203 12th St.,
Meridian, Miss.,
Feb. 24, 1925.

Dear Miss Scribner:

I appreciate so much the information given in your letter regarding the real facts in the case about Fisk. Somehow I just couldn't believe the facts as given by the newspapers.

I give my note of confidence in Dr. McKenzie and in speaking for myself I can say that I have always believed in him.

I was fortunate in being able to get a copy of the Nashville Globe and I decided that from the account given, all statements were not true to fact. So many questions have come to mind since the outburst that I seem to be able to think of nothing else but seek to find answers.

It seems to me that no person of intelligence would raise his voice against Dr. McKenzie and the work he has done for the cause of higher education among my people. I have only words of praise and commendation for him.

I shall always oppose any propoganda used against Fisk and those who have affairs in charge. Even though I regret that such violence was used in the outbreak, I feel that it can quickly be forgotten. Remembering that such set-backs are only temporary, I take hope.

The majority of the members of the great Fisk family are behind the present administration. The misguided are in the minority.

Yours truly,

(Signed) H. N. MONTGOMERY, '20.

Tuskegee Institute, Ala.
March 2, 1925.

Dr. F. A. McKenzie,
Fisk University,
Nashville, Tenn.

Dear Dr. McKenzie:

I regretted very much to hear of the trouble you have had at Fisk. Immediately after the outbreak, I relied on my daughter for information concerning it. I did not give her any advice as to how she should act during the disturbance. She stood with the Administration and I heartily endorse her actions and those of any other girl in Jubilee Hall who stood with the Administration.

The outbreak, the spirit of the men who instigated it, and the results which followed, are to be greatly regretted, but as regrettable as these are, it would have been better for you to have stopped it as you did rather than to have it reach Jubilee Hall. Who could say what would have happened or what would not have happened had that rebellious crowd gone into Jubilee Hall after ten o'clock at night—doors open, lights out, and any and all the boys who wanted to, go into Jubilee Hall, thus leaving the girls with no other protection than a mob spirit. Let us thank God that they did not get to Jubilee Hall.

You have my sympathy, and I think with the dissatisfied element removed, Fisk will move on as rapidly as it did before.

Very respectfully yours,

(Signed) L. J. WATKINS, '93.
(Father of a student.)

Released to the Negro Associated Press by a Fisk Graduate and published in *The Pittsburgh American* and the *Guard* (Texas).

I shall appreciate very much having you release the following article to all members of your association. I am far from being a man of money, but if there are any reasonable charges for this service, I shall be glad to pay.

To Every Fiskite; to Every Colored Person of America:

A number of years ago, the National Association for the advancement of colored people was organized for a number of specific purposes, which we are very well acquainted with.

One of the greatest fights being waged by the N. A. A. C. P. toward the realization of its aims has been and is its fight against mob violence and lynching. The best men of both the black and white races of our country have lined up in support of this great organization because of its aims; aims which would be not only for the benefit of colored America, out for all America. These men have fought mob violence and are still fighting it. The Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill gives evidence of what the best whites think about mob violence and the support it has received from the colored people, certainly expresses their view. All of us are in agreement when it comes to the question of the suppression of mob violence and lynching, but what are we doing to help those who are fighting it? Each has his way of rendering this co-operation. Some give money, some give moral support and some give active service. Any one of the three is as important as the other. The three must go together or the battle is lost. All great and relatively permanent changes in history bear this out. All of us know this thoroughly.

Now I come to the point which I am convinced is the point which all of us must uphold and actively support, regardless as to whether we are giving our money, our moral support or our active service. We, ourselves, must exert every ounce of mental, physical and moral energy within our bodies and souls to prevent mob violence among ourselves. What am I talking about? Just go back to June 2, 1924 at 8:00 P.M.—to Fisk University—to Memorial Chapel—and you will have the answer to the question, "What am I talking about?" If you don't know, it will pay

you to find out what happened then. Let it be enough for me to say that an address was supposed to have been given by one of our best educated men, but instead we heard a cunning, ill-timed talk charged to the brim with true or false statements, which would prey upon the weak and radical-tending minds of certain students and henchmen, who were to "go forth and declare to the world that the deliverer was at hand." What was the result of that night of June 2, 1924, at Fisk University? The result, or the beginning of the result, took place several days ago—at Fisk—a disgrace to the students of Fisk—to clear-minded colored students everywhere—to those men and women, black and white, who are continually fighting mob violence. You know what happened several days ago at Fisk. It was published by the white papers—on the front page. Students of an institution of higher learning—students who really condemn mob violence—students who are supposed to be far enough advanced to think for themselves are reported to have taken part in a mob demonstration—to have permitted their minds and bodies to become poisoned by henchmen working for "the power behind the throne," who now sits comfortably in "his" home, while some little weak-minded students sit in jail. Wake up students of Fisk—colored students everywhere—colored men and women everywhere—for the sake of the race and its advancement don't allow your minds to fall prey to the wiles and radicalism of those of our group who are "supposed to be" leaders. Think it out for yourselves. Don't be a subscriber to those false ideals being broadcasted by certain people through their henchmen—the false ideals that put Russia in the condition which it is in today. Don't put to naught, by participating in mob demonstrations, the fight good men of our race and good men of the whites are fighting. If you have a fight to make, fight it out like intelligent, clear-minded men—not like ignorant, weak-minded, bloodthirsty reds. If you don't, you're sure to bring destruction upon all of us. I repeat, for the sake of the race and its advancement, don't fall prey to that radicalism coming from a certain source which you know as well as I do.

I guess you wonder why I write this. It is because I am a Fiskite—a graduate of 1924—and uncompromisingly against mob demonstrations, and the causes, by all people at all times. I know what Fisk has come through during the past ten or fifteen years—in fact, since its beginning—and I know it now has a million dollar endowment fund. I realize also

that no man is capable of taking an institution which is all but "sucked-in" by debt and within the short space of ten years bless it with an endowment fund of one million dollars and at the same time run things 100 per cent according to the wishes of all people. Infinite power is necessary for the accomplishment of this and no man—even though certain people think certain men should have it, has infinite power. Man's mind is finite and must be satisfied with finite accomplishments. Therefore, Fiskites, and all colored men and women, let us rejoice over the "Million Dollars" and see what the next few years will bring.

WILBUR H. TARVER, '24
Box 152, Parmele, N. C.

Savannah, Ga.,
February 22, 1925.

My dear Miss Scribner:

I was very glad to receive your letter giving the desired information that all persons related to Fisk waited to hear.

I have regretted that our family affairs had to come to the public in such a manner.

I earnestly trust that in a very short time, conditions will be adjusted to the satisfaction of all concerned and that the union will be stronger.

Remember me to all and remember I am for Fisk in storm as well as in peace, or even more so. There is always a time to show our love and appreciation—if not in time of trouble, when?

Very sincerely,

(Signed) CORNELIA O. McDOWELL,
(H. Ec. '15)

Dudley, N. C.
February 20, 1925.

My dear Miss Scribner:

We only heard, through your letter, of the sad and serious condition of affairs in and at Fisk. Our hearts are filled with sorrow.

Fifty-two years ago, 1873, I entered our *Dear Old Fisk*, then in the soldiers barracks. I selected Fisk because I desired to attend a school whose motto was, as I understood it: "Let all things be done *decently* and *in order*." If I had desired it, I am sure, I could have secured a free scholarship in a state school, university so-called. But when I heard of the rowdyism, near-riot condition there, though not a professing Christian then, Fisk was my *choice*.

We, my wife and I, have no respect, (and this was our attitude throughout our student life in Fisk), for young men or women who enter Fisk or any other school knowing the rules and regulations, and then wilfully disregard or disobey them.

The negro's best asset in the present age is found in law and order based on *Christian Love*. As to: "Before I'd be a slave," we rejoice that we are accounted worthy to be the bond-slaves of our Master, Jesus Christ.

Assuring you that we support President McKenzie's administration, because we believe it is what *our* and all young people need today.

We are,

Faithfully yours,

(Signed) B. F. and MRS. OUSLEY, '81 & '83.

Joseph Keasby Brick School,
Bricks, North Carolina,
February 21, 1925.

Miss D. A. Scribner,
Fisk University,
Nashville, Tenn.

Dear Miss Scribner:

We are grieved over the situation at Fisk but are not downhearted. Our confidence in Dr. McKenzie's administration is immeasurably strengthened.

We are looking to a greater FISK. There is still "rapture of the forward view."

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) JOHN H. GORDON '16,
JULIA I. GORDON '17.

Box 156, Marshall, Texas,
February 23, 1925.

Miss Dora A. Scribner,
Fisk University,
Nashville, Tenn.

Dear Friend:

I do not believe there is a colored man living that could have done for dear old Fisk what President McKenzie has done. All honor to him, and for himself and Fisk, he is building a monument more durable than bronze, and more sublime than the regal elevation of the pyramids, which neither the change of seasons or the flight of time will be able to destroy.

I am preaching and teaching, and as a result I come in contact with the agitator and the place-hunter. There was a man here that wanted the place that I hold. When he had been in the community, I could tell it from the action of some of the students. Some of the students disobeyed the rules of the school. I attempted to counsel them. They would not heed my advice. I suspended them at once. A jumping or a fence-breaking cow will ruin a herd. President McKenzie has more patience than I have. However, he was trying to save those that knew not what they did. There is a time with my group when forbearance ceases to be a virtue. Yes, we will stand by the president. The poet says:

"Be still, sad heart, and cease repining,
Behind the cloud is the sun still shining."

This very upheaval may bring into lime-light the agitators, and the world may get to see the ones that have been throwing the rocks and hiding their hands.

The Negro college is on trial. And in the language of the immortal Lincoln "It will not do to trade horses while we are crossing a stream."

This bunch of disgruntled and dissatisfied would-be leaders has had a movement on some time to discredit the work of President McKenzie. The Lord is not in their plan. A greater Fisk will come forth. The president has been weighed in the balances, and not found wanting. The war is on, fight to a finish, pay but little attention to flags of truce and gifts, for the reason they may contain a Trojan horse.

I am a 100 per cent Fiskite. If you think I can serve the cause in any way, command me.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) NELSON T. MITCHELL, '83.

February 7, 1925.

Dear Dr. McKenzie:

I was particularly solicitous when I read of the latest crisis at Fisk. I was afraid that under the stress of the moment you might repudiate all of your good endeavors and curse the day that you ever came to Fisk. I was very much relieved when I read your statement to the press still making in that hour of trial, a plea for Negro education. It takes a magnanimous soul to plead for those who have their sabers drawn and swords un-sheathed ready to do violence not only to the soul but even to the body. Certainly you have made yourself a martyr for Negro education and you drink the bitter dregs of the cup from which most of us are unable to drink. Whether I always agree with your method or not I do agree with your resolute purpose and I shall never be guilty of unfriendly criticism. In these critical hours which try the souls of men you have my deepest sympathy which I know that I can give.

Yours sincerely,

T. THOMAS WARREN, '21.

Fayette County Training School,
Somerville, Tenn.,
March 2, 1925.

Dr. F. A. McKenzie,
Nashville, Tenn.

Dear Dr. McKenzie:

I have just now been able to understand the cause of the recent disturbance at Fisk. I feel compelled to offer you my sympathy.

My daughter, Margaret, who had entered her second year at Fisk when she had to come home on account of the illness which terminated in our great loss of her, loved Fisk. The principles it stood for, the kindness of her teachers, especially Miss Cook, and Dr. Spencer's untiring efforts to help her, we can never forget.

When we sent our children to Fisk we felt that we knew what Fisk stood for in the development of a splendid class of Christian men and women whom the race needs. If students fail, it is not because Fisk does not put before them high ideals of education, culture and refinement.

Your kindness and interest in my little son, when he was there (for he was very young), his father and I appreciate. It is hard for youth to understand why teachers and parents have to set a standard for them to go by. It is no uncommon thing for leaders to be misunderstood and misquoted.

It is no uncommon thing for students to be misled, and grasp at shining air bubbles that burst when touched.

We as leaders are not infallible but I am certain that no man in your position, approached properly, will fail to give a reasonable hearing to a matter presented properly.

I regret that the young men who stepped aside, had not more experience with the problems of their parents. I regret that they do not know human nature.

The trouble with most schools is timidity in the handling of socializing. Study and socializing were not meant to go together.

Sometimes our daughters are of a serious temperament, and school life to them means much, others have to be taught that "Life is real and Life is earnest."

Fisk has always been to my mind the ideal school for the chosen few of the race who might be able to meet the requirements. It does not deserve to be viciously attacked. It does not deserve to be misrepresented. Its influence over the race has been too far-reaching and of too long standing.

It is the duty of every parent to support Fisk who ever sent a child there, and who has ever been there to see the painstaking care of those in charge.

Parents must realize that their children are not free from mistakes and not uphold them in wrong but line them up to be obedient, respectful and studious, and if they are that, seldom will any trouble arise that cannot be amicably adjusted.

I write this because I feel it my duty to one who was very kind to my children at Fisk University, and I am certain that in order to develop proper leaders of the race out of our pupils, parents, teachers and pupils must work together.

God never puts on us more than we can bear. When one is sure that he is right, he can only go ahead, and "the peace of God which passeth all understanding" will keep you in all your ways.

Very sincerely,

(Signed) MRS. W. P. WARE,
Jeanes Supervisor.

Mother of two former students.
Somerville, Tenn. ·

Agnes Irwin School,
Lancaster, Ky.,
March 2, 1925.

Dr. F. A. McKenzie,
Fisk University.

My dear Dr. McKenzie and to whom it may
concern:

The seriousness of the situation at Fisk
was called to my attention by an article in
the Courier-Journal.

Dr. McKenzie, please accept my sympathy
for your distress, and the seeming lack of
gratitude on the part of those whom you are
trying to help most.

As to the general situation, it appears to
me that the Negro is on trial as never before
to prove himself capable and deserving of
the best in education. Having been given a
million dollars for the best academic instruc-
tion, the younger generation are about to
prove that the confidence expressed thereby
was misplaced. It therefore devolves upon
Fisk's thousand alumni to prove themselves
by rallying to Dr. McKenzie's support, and
from what I know of them I believe they will
do so.

Any information on the situation, especi-
ally as to the thinking of the alumni, will
be gladly received. In all things you may
count on my heartiest sympathy and co-opera-
tion.

Yours for the cause,

(Signed) SARAH E. WITHERS, '08.

STATE OF ILLINOIS
Division of Insurance

Springfield, Illinois,
February 20, 1925.

Prof. Dora A. Scribner,
Fisk University,
Nashville, Tenn.

Dear Miss Scribner:

Have just finished reading your letter enclosed with the statement of the President, sent from the President's office. How helpful it is at this time, as you were always a help and strength to us all. Am very much tempted to run down and talk to you for a minute, for if I could get away at this time conveniently, that is what I would like to do.

So much has been said, and so much is at stake that to see you, Miss Parmenter, and Miss Cook would help me so much.

People are changing so and the young people are so disappointed in the changes, that they can not adjust themselves happily to conditions. This is true North as well as South. It is true of the office of the Division of Insurance at the Capitol Building here where I am beginning my ninth year the first of March. The spirit in here has changed very much since I have been here. People in so many places seem to have lost sight of their ideals.

Thank you for sharing that beautiful letter with others of us of the alumni. President McKenzie I do not know, only to meet. I am continuing to pray for Fisk during this crisis and for you and the others there that we love so dearly, and who have helped to shape the good in us for life and for service.

Very sincerely,

(Signed) ALICE WILLIAMS TABORN, Col.,
'10.

904 S. College St., Springfield, Illinois.

THE GALVESTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

West District School

W. N. Cummings, Principal

1823 Avenue K,
Galveston, Texas,
March 4, 1925.

Dr. F. A. McKenzie,
President, Fisk University,
Nashville, Tenn.

Dear Dr. McKenzie:

I hope that the higher powers will uphold you in your stand for moral righteousness.

You have my full sympathy.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) W. N. CUMMINGS, N., '82.

392 S. Lauderdale St.,
Memphis, Tenn.,
March 4, 1925.

Dr. F. A. McKenzie,
President of Fisk University.

Dear Friend:

I have received a letter from Miss Scribner, also a pamphlet concerning the recent trouble at Fisk. I regret very much that such an affair was possible at our great University. I love the institution, and hope nothing has, or ever shall happen to hinder its progress.

"Fret not thyself because of evil-doers,—
Delight thyself also in the Lord, and he shall
give thee the desires of thine heart."—Bible.

You have my sympathy and prayer that the trouble may be amicably adjusted, and no harm may come to the University because of it.

Very truly,

Yours for success of Fisk,

(Signed) V. W. BROUGHTON, '75.

Columbia, Tenn.,
March 4, 1925.

Prof. F. A. McKenzie.

Dear Sir:

I was very glad to get the leaflet you sent me, giving the opinions of Alumni and patrons in regard to the recent uprising at the University.

It is very gratifying to the friends of higher education among the Negroes to know that those who have enjoyed the advantages of Fisk, so heartily support you in your efforts to maintain high ideals and strict discipline.

Some might say that it would have been better for you to have taken the offensive earlier in the session and dismissed the leaders of the rebellion before it made such progress; but I think you acted wisely in permitting matters to come to a head.

This has been a very trying experience for you, but we are warned that "They who would live godly in this present world will suffer persecution."

Confident of your vindication by the Board of Trustees, and in the ultimate re-establishment of authority at the University, I remain,

Your friend,

(Signed) D. D. LITTLE.

Extract from Letter of Mrs. Helen Ricks London, '14, to Miss Scribner.

March 2, 1925.

You know how proud I am of Fisk and its ideals, and how I've always appreciated the sacrifices that have made it the wonderful institution it is,—it **must always be.**

I am praying it will all come right. It will —“For right prevails.”

Understand my genuine loyalty and devotion to its interests.

Sincerely,

(Signed) HELEN RICKS LONDON, '14.

THE GALVESTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

East District School

H. T. Davis, Principal.

Galveston, Texas,
March 2, 1925.

Dr. F. A. McKenzie,
President, Fisk University,
Nashville, Tenn.

My dear Dr. McKenzie:

I am always for law and order. I regard you and the faculty at Fisk as the regularly constituted authorities for the preservation and enforcement of law and order at Fisk. Whatever grievances, imaginary or otherwise, those who come under your authority may have, these differences should be settled in a regular, lawful way.

I was successful in having parents keep two students at Fisk until we could hear from you. You shall have my support until I am convinced you and the faculty are wrong. Students have no right to take matters of this kind in their hands to settle. That is for the faculty and the Board of Trustees to do, and I am reasonably certain that a just complaint will be listened to and settled right.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) H. T. DAVIS, '96,
Principal, East District School.

South Sioux City, Neb.,
February 23, 1925.

Miss Dora Scribner,
Fisk University,
Nashville, Tenn.

My dear Miss Scribner;

Your letter dated the 14, 1925, is received. I note what you have to say. I was once a student at Fisk myself, as you no doubt will remember, and of course I am somewhat conversant with the moods of our people.

I had heard something of the administration at Fisk before. It seems that some of the alumni are not satisfied with some of the things that are going on there, or have been done. I also saw in the daily paper here in Sioux City, an account of the trouble that you were having.

You may be assured that my heart goes out in deep sympathy for those of you who have given your all for the uplift of our people, for what more can a man do than to give his life for you? If the students would conserve some of that energy that they are using to fight some of their enemies, perhaps it would be more effective. We oftentimes treat those who love us by far worse than we do those that hate us.

I would not think much of the President if he had no ideas of his own. Some seem to complain because the conditions are not as they were forty years ago; they even tell us that this old world is a much different thing from what it used to be.

I am a very little man and I know that I do not know as much as some of the people who are making such a great furore. But I refuse to follow them, for I must be shown that you mean to do, or have done with evil intent, the things that have been charged. Of course, perhaps you have done things that were not to the liking of some of our finer selves, but we often unintentionally offend the other fellow. I think that some things are real childish, and certainly not serious enough to wreck Fisk for, to say the least. I have a little boy not quite two years old and he asks me every evening when I come home from

work to build him a house up to the sky, as I have taught him to say, and before I have the blocks that high he knocks it down; so you may know that I must grow very impatient. So you must continue until you have built Fisk University up to the sky. Don't give up the ship, for you will show that you are a weakling if you do; he that puts his hand to the plow and turns back is not worthy of the Kingdom of Heaven, so I am told.

Do not let the students run the University, for if you do we do not need you.

So with malice toward none and with charity for all, let us strive to bind up the wounds of our dear Alma Mater.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) THOMAS W. STEWART, '11.

DOUGLASS HIGH SCHOOL
Mounds, Illinois

March 8, 1925.

President F. A. McKenzie,
Fisk University,
Nashville, Tenn.

Dear Doctor McKenzie:

Quite recently I heard and read something about the trouble at Fisk. My information at this time is very meager. However, I think I can see thru it all.

I have this to say: When I was in dear old Fisk I could understand your high ideals even if I did fail to measure up at times. I knew that your one great aim was to raise the University to its highest possible attainment. I felt that the needs of the University required your guidance in your own way. It is my belief that you are as true-hearted and whole-hearted as a man can be. I regret that some people do not understand you. Who is wholly understood in his greatest efforts? You are a real friend to the needy and I do not think a student should go to Fisk who does not need. You make everything plain enough to all students who enter, therefore they are wrong who refused your guidance. If I had sons and daughters I would send all of them to Fisk, for Fisk stands for the highest ideals. You are my ideal president, Dr. McKenzie.

Best wishes for your continued success, I am,

Very truly yours,

(Signed) C. W. RANSOM, '21.

604 N. Kelham St.,
Oklahoma City, Okla.,
March 2, 1925.

Dr. F. A. McKenzie,
Fisk University,
Nashville, Tenn.

Dear President McKenzie:

It has been my whole determination to write you since the outbreak of the student-body there, for I have an interest over there, but have been listening with hope to hear that the students had returned as they considered what they were losing. Now I trust that everything is going well again.

I was so sorry to know that just a few smart boys wanted to have things their way in the administration of the school, and caused all of this shame and disgrace to come upon such a high and noble University as Fisk. And here, Dr. McKenzie, rest assured that you have our co-operation and sympathy.

I have been busy writing my boy letters of consolation and instruction as all parents should do. Home training means much to our boys and girls; home is the place to shape the destiny of our children, for as they are at home, so they go out from home.

I was on the campus at Fisk last May and was greatly enthused. Everything was fine. I certainly enjoyed my short visit there and was treated with great courtesy by the President and faculty.

So let us impress upon you our congratulations in your firm stand for the administration of Fisk University.

Yours truly,

(Signed) MR. and MRS. ABRAHAM WARD
(parents of a student).

R. 10, Box 155.

P.S.: We are proud to know that Herod was so much for the principles of right that (as he wrote us) in spite of the walk-out of students, he remained in school. We feel proud of him.

W. A. RAYFIELD & CO.,
Architects

Birmingham, Ala.,

March 2, 1925.

Dr. F. A. McKenzie,
Fisk University,
Nashville, Tenn.

Dear Dr. McKenzie:

I have been reading with much interest the several reports about the disturbance at Fisk. I am glad to know that things are shaping themselves in better form for a greater Fisk. As a teacher for eight years at Tuskegee Institute, I know what it means by discipline and leader for young men and women. While I am a graduate of Howard University, there has always been a sympathy for Fisk and Atlanta, and the stand you took for order and principles of Fisk was correct. My daughter would have been in Fisk today if there had been a place for her in your institution, and we both (Mrs. Rayfield and myself) have regretted many times that the school was filled, and we sent her elsewhere. Fisk stands for Christian principles and is so well located for our people in the South.

Allow us to extend to you our co-operation in your effort to bring the great principles of Fisk as you see them. We are with you, and if we can be of any help to you, call on us.

With our best wishes for your position,

Yours very truly,

(Signed) W. A. RAYFIELD,
Architect.
(Graduate of Howard University.)

Spelman College,
Atlanta, Ga.,
March 2, 1925.

My dear Dr. McKenzie:

Just a line from a graduate to express to you my deepest regret in the very unfortunate affair at Fisk. Congratulations to the students who had the manhood and womanhood to stay at their posts.

I heartily approve of the administration and the discipline it stands for. May God give you the courage and fortitude to carry on the great work you planned.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed)

MRS. MADELINE SMITH DAVIS, '14.

NEWS ITEMS

FISK SUPPORTER'S PROPERTY BURNED

Evidence Found of Oiled Rags in Destroyed Automobile

Dr. W. W. Sumlin, Negro physician, who supported the faculty of Fisk University at a public mass meeting held following a strike of students at the school, reported this morning that another attempt had been made "to burn him out" when his automobile and garage were destroyed by fire at 3 o'clock this morning. He resides at 1710 Jefferson Street.

Dr. Sumlin said he returned from a call at 12:30 o'clock and put his car in the garage. About 3 o'clock he was awakened by smoke entering the house. He said he made an investigation and found traces of oiled rags that had been thrown in his car and ignited.

Directly after Dr. Sumlin issued a statement censuring the striking students of Fisk for their action the first attempt was made to burn his home. The fire was extinguished, however, before any appreciable damage was done.

The physician said the attempts to fire his property had not changed his attitude and that now he was just as much for what was right as at first.

(The Nashville Banner, Feb. 27, 1925)

UPHOLDS PRESIDENT OF FISK UNIVERSITY

Dr. W. F. Waters Issues Statement Regarding Rebellion at Institution

The following statement with respect to the recent student rebellion at Fisk University, has been issued by Dr. W. F. Waters, former secretary of the Rock City Academy of Medicine, and himself a graduate of three colleges.

“Since the Fisk rebellion, resulting in the destruction of property belonging to the university, and threats and attempted intimidation against a citizen, and destruction of property belonging to him, because of his stand in defense of law and order, I have held my peace though conscious of the fact that it was my duty to speak out. But desiring to be perfectly fair to all and believing that public statements should be made after due deliberation, and considerately, dispassionately and without prejudice, I thought that until the fire of passion and the whirlwind of confusion which swept before the cave in which the man was secluded the still voice of reason would not be heard.

“The Fisk incident has been much discussed both pro and con and many causes given of the trouble. But so far as I know the one deep and underlying cause of the trouble at Fisk has not been dealt with. It is this: The deep undercurrents of the sea of humanity, as manifested by the tendencies of the times, that steadily and progressively move on toward universal democracy. Students of affairs must take knowledge of these currents and tendencies. Autocrats in all forms of government, whether in church, schools, or state, cannot longer permanently exist—and not even can an autocratic family government be peacefully maintained today. The recognition of and insistence upon the principle basic of governments that they derive their just powers from the consent of the government today both unsatisfactory and unstable. Students of universities are no exceptions in this respect to humanity outside these institutions, and while the citizens not in school insist that taxation without representation is tyranny, those within schools today think that education without representation is tyranny. Such facts must be faced, however undesirable they may seem to edu-

cators. These tendencies then toward pure democracy led the Fisk students, as they have those of other universities, to seek to put into practical application the basic governmental principle mentioned above, and with ambitions fired by the exploits of reformers, martyrs and heroes both true and so-called, about whom they had been studying in books, possessed with a zeal which was not according to knowledge, they went about to establish their own government, not submitting themselves unto the government of the university. These fundamental principles of government will have to be finally taken into account in school as well as state, for schooling is nothing unless it be a training in citizenship.

“I have taught in colleges and am in the deepest sympathy with faculties and their heads; I have pursued courses in several colleges, graduating from three institutions of learning and thus, being longer a student than a teacher, I am also greatly in sympathy with students and love them in honor because of their destiny in the state and in society at large. These facts are not cited in extenuation of acts of violence committed by students, for it is evident that authority of heads of schools are of prime importance, and law and order must be rigidly maintained. Even should it be granted that in some of the demands of the Fisk students who rebelled against rightful rule there was a measure of reasonableness, the methods they employed in attempting to reach their desires were rebellious and revolutionary and therefore most decidedly unreasonable, unpatriotic and wrong. Should they have obtained their demands through such means the very fact that they did so through riot and violence would have shown these particular persons unfit to advise with the faculty regarding school rules and laws. But it must be borne in mind that the fact that these rebels of Fisk were not capable of representation in the government of the university does not conclude that there are or were not other students whose advice and counsel might not be worth while.

“Now, I wish it to be most distinctly understood that I am in hearty accord with President McKenzie in the firm and just stand he was forced to take in matters at Fisk. He did what he thought best and in the best way he felt it ought to have been done. Who would dare do less as a president of a college? Any one reading or hearing the chapel conversations given the students during this try-

ing time at Fisk cannot help but see that Dr. McKenzie's heart is right. He has the tenderness of a father toward the students; the spirit of a martyr, and the disposition of the Son of God, the lowly Nazarene.

"He and his faculty working together with his committee of a greater Fisk, shall certainly bring on the happy time when this famed and faithful university shall indeed be a greater Fisk with greater privileges for students, greater loyalty upon their part, greater appreciation of the faculty and its head, greater wealth at its command, and greater realms in manhood and womanhood produced through God for humanity. Noble gentle benefactor and friend of both thy race and mine, ready are we not only to give expressions of endorsement and appreciation of thee and thy great work of love, but to stand back of thee with every power that we can command even unto death if need be.

"DR. W. F. WATERS."

(The Nashville Banner, March 4, 1925)

STATE BEGINS INVESTIGATION OF BLAZE AT FISK

**Probe Will Continue Several Days, Say
Officials.**

An investigation of the fire which damaged the cafeteria and book store at Fisk University Wednesday night, was started Thursday by the state fire prevention department.

Deputies from the state department remained on the ground throughout the morning and reported that many persons in the vicinity were quizzed concerning the fire.

Deputies who visited the scene declined to give their opinion of the fire, but announced that the investigation would probably last several days.

That the fire was of incendiary origin was the opinion expressed by certain officials of the city who are assisting the state authorities in their investigation.

A recent strike of students at the university, caused by the refusal of Dr. McKenzie to resign as head of the institution, furnished grounds for investigating the fire, officials of the state department said.

Recently a near riot was caused at the school, resulting in the dismissal of several students and bringing about the strike.

The fire, which caused only a loss of about \$1,800, was discovered by a student returning to one of the dormitories shortly after 9 p. m.

When the flames were extinguished, a number of students in sympathy with President McKenzie stood guard over the burned area Wednesday night.

Dr. McKenzie was non-committal when asked if he believed the fire of incendiary origin.

(From *The Nashville Evening Tennessean*,
March 5, 1925)

FISK SUPPORTER STRUCK ON HEAD

Dr. W. F. Waters, Negro dentist, 900 Twelfth Avenue, South, reported to the police department that he was assaulted and rendered unconscious Thursday night at 11 o'clock on Grand Avenue, near Thirteenth Avenue. Dr. Waters says he was passing the mouth of an alley when some one jumped out and hit him over the head with a blunt instrument. He was rendered unconscious and it was more than an hour before he recovered and called for help. With the exception of the blow on the head, Dr. Waters was uninjured. He was not robbed.

Dr. Waters is one of the Negro leaders of the city who has supported the side of the faculty at Fisk University following the recent walkout of a majority of the students.

(From **The Nashville Banner**, March 6, 1925)